

CLAIMS

1. A tip rack for holding a plurality of pipette tips that have been removed from a plurality of pipettes, thereby causing static electricity to be deposited on the pipette tips, the tip rack comprising:

a. a face having a plurality of seats formed thereon for holding pipette tips;
and

b. at least one sidewall depending from the face;

wherein the face and the at least one sidewall are comprised of an electrically conductive plastic material whereby static electricity deposited on the pipette tips is discharged through the tip rack when the pipette tips contact the tip rack.

2. The tip rack of claim 1 wherein the face and the at least one sidewall form a one-piece conductive outer shell, and the tip rack further comprises a support insert connected to the conductive outer shell such that the support insert is covered by the conductive outer shell.

3. The tip rack of claim 2 wherein the support insert comprises a plurality of support walls that form chambers dimensioned to receive the pipette tips.

4. The tip rack of claim 1 wherein the face and the at least one sidewall are formed of a conductive plastic material impregnated with carbon.

5. The tip rack of claim 4 wherein the conductive plastic material comprises about 15% or more carbon, by weight.

6. The tip rack of claim 5 wherein the conductive plastic material comprises about 21% carbon, by weight.

7. The tip rack of claim 1 wherein the face and the at least one sidewall are formed of a conductive plastic material impregnated with metal flakes, metal powder or metal strands.

8. A method of discharging static electricity from a plurality of pipette tips held by a plurality of pipettes, the method comprising:

a. providing a tip rack comprised of an electrically conductive plastic material, the tip rack including a face with a plurality of seats formed thereon for holding pipette tips;

b. removing the plurality of pipette tips from the plurality of pipettes; and

c. seating the plurality of pipette tips in the plurality of seats such that the static electricity deposited on the pipette tips is discharged through the tip rack when the pipette tips are contacted with the tip rack.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the static electricity is discharged through the tip rack by conducting the static electricity to ground when the pipette tips are contacted with the tip rack.

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the static electricity is discharged through the tip rack by dissipating the static electricity on the surface of the tip rack when the pipette tips are contacted with the tip rack.

11. The method of claim 8 wherein the tip rack includes a one-piece conductive outer shell comprising the face, and the tip rack further includes a support insert connected to the conductive outer shell such that the support insert is covered by the conductive outer shell.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein the step of removing the plurality of pipette tips from the plurality of pipettes results in the generation of additional static electricity on the pipette tips that is discharged through the tip rack when the pipette tips are contacted with the tip rack.

13. In a tip rack for use with a plurality of pipette tips, the plurality of pipette tips having static electricity deposited thereon as a result of friction between the plurality of pipette tips and a plurality of pipettes when the plurality of pipette tips are inserted on and removed from the plurality of pipettes, and the tip rack comprising a face having a

plurality of seats formed thereon for holding pipette tips and at least one sidewall depending from the face, the improvement comprising:

the tip rack being formed of an electrically conductive plastic material whereby static electricity deposited on the pipette tips is discharged through the tip rack when the pipette tips contact the tip rack.

14. The tip rack of claim 13 wherein the face and the at least one sidewall form a one-piece conductive outer shell, and the tip rack further comprises a support insert connected to the conductive outer shell such that the support insert is covered by the conductive outer shell.

15. The tip rack of claim 14 wherein the support insert is formed of non-conductive polypropylene

16. The tip rack of claim 14 wherein the support insert is formed of conductive plastic material.

17. The tip rack of claim 13 wherein the tip rack is formed of a conductive plastic material impregnated with carbon.

18. The tip rack of claim 17 wherein the conductive plastic material comprises about 15% or more carbon, by weight.

19. The tip rack of claim 17 wherein the conductive plastic material comprises about 21% carbon, by weight.

20. The tip rack of claim 13 wherein the tip rack is formed of a conductive plastic material impregnated with metal flakes, metal powder or metal strands.